

BETTER MONEY HABITS

# Achieving Financial Independence: Taking the Next Steps

**BANK OF AMERICA** 

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

*Special Olympics*  **ndi** | NATIONAL  
DISABILITY  
INSTITUTE

# Financial Safety



# Three possible ways people can steal from you

1

Stealing your money,  
checks, debit or  
credit cards

2

Strangers, or even  
friends or coworkers,  
taking advantage of you

3

Stealing your identity



# 1. Make it hard for people to steal from you

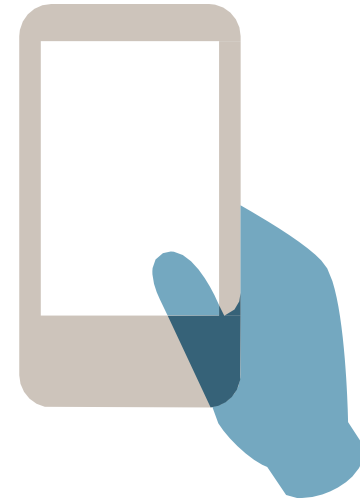
## **Don't leave money, checks, debit or credit cards:**

- In plain view, whether at home, at work, or at the gym or pool
- In the glove compartment of your car or a friend's car
- In your hotel room (unless you have a safe)



# What to do if your checks, debit or credit cards are stolen

Contact your bank or companies with an account in your name.



## 2. Ways you can be tricked

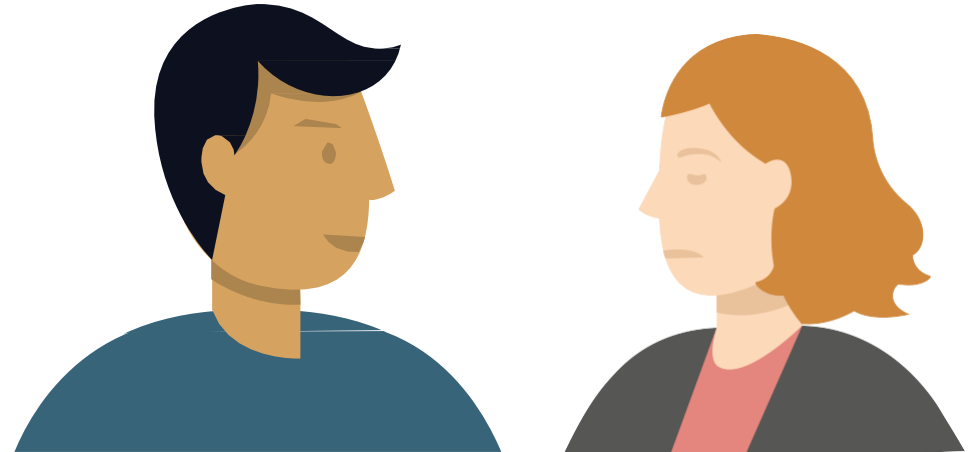
### **How do you tell if someone is trustworthy?**

- Be cautious and skeptical of people asking for your money.
- Strangers and even some friends, online friends or coworkers may not have good intentions.



# Is it safe or not?

- Someone you have not talked to recently visits or calls you.



# Is it safe or not?

- You become friends with someone on Facebook. You start talking to them online a lot and maybe even over the phone. You have never met in person.





### 3. Understanding identity theft

#### **WHAT IS IT?**

When someone else uses your personal information to commit crimes or pay for things using your money without your knowledge or permission.

#### **PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Information that can be used to identify, contact or locate you.

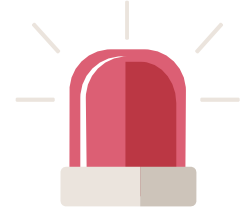
#### **What are examples of personal information?**



# How your identity can be stolen and what to do about it

## ISSUE

**Dumpster diving:** Someone rummages through your trash looking for papers with personal information.



## SOLUTION

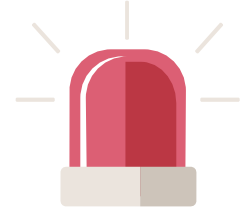
- Be careful about what you throw out.
- Before you throw important documents away, shred or tear them up.



# How your identity can be stolen and what to do about it

## ISSUE

**Phishing:** Someone pretends to work at a financial institution to get you to reveal your personal information.



## SOLUTION

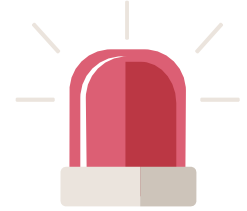
- Look out for strange emails.
- Watch how much you share online.
- Be skeptical of strangers asking personal questions.



# How your identity can be stolen and what to do about it

## ISSUE

**Online theft:** Someone steals your password online.



## SOLUTION

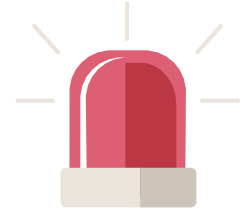
- Look out for strange emails.
- Use strong passwords.
- Watch how much you share online.
- Be careful what you click.



# How your identity can be stolen and what to do about it

## ISSUE

**Electronic device theft:** Someone steals your personal information using your current or old cell phone or computer.



## SOLUTION

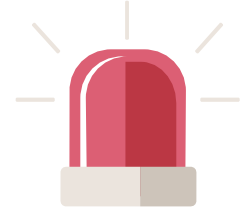
- Use strong passwords.
- Secure your smartphone.
- Don't keep sensitive information on your phone.
- Keep your technology up to date.



# How your identity can be stolen and what to do about it

## ISSUE

**Your mail is stolen:** Someone steals bills, financial statements or even a new debit or credit card from your mailbox.



## SOLUTION

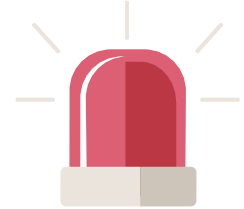
- Don't let your mail pile up.
- Get a mailbox with a lock.
- Keep track of your bills and financial statements.



# How your identity can be stolen and what to do about it

## ISSUE

**Online shopping theft:** Someone steals your credit card information or personal information when you're shopping online.



## SOLUTION

- Look for sites that start with HTTPS.
- Don't use untrusted Wi-Fi.
- Use secure payment methods.



# Additional steps to stay safe while shopping online

- Don't store credit card information on your phone.
- Make sure the retailer is trusted by the Better Business Bureau:  
<https://www.bbb.org/>
- Only shop on official retail sites (do not click on official-looking promotional items on social media).





## Summary: Protecting your financial identity

- Be cautious of sharing information online and with others.
- Be skeptical of strangers asking personal questions.
- Keep your mail safe and secure.
- Don't keep sensitive information on your phone.
- Use strong passwords for your phone and online accounts.
- Don't open strange emails or click unknown online links.
- Use secure payment methods when shopping online.



# Signs that your identity may have been stolen

1

You see things that you did not buy on your bank or credit card statement.

2

You don't get your bills or other mail.

3

Stores refuse your checks, credit or debit cards.



# Financial safety review

1

Keep money, debit and credit cards and other valuables safe.

2

Know what personal information is and how to protect it.

3

Know the different ways your identity can be stolen and what to do if it happens.

4

Be alert to people who ask you for money or personal information.



